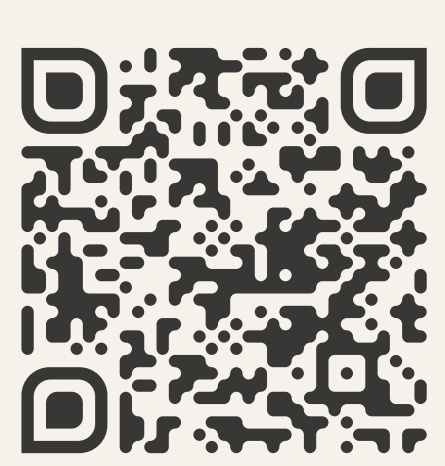


HONORING

JUSTICE

# Ruth Bader Ginsburg

AT THE NEW YORK STATE CAPITOL



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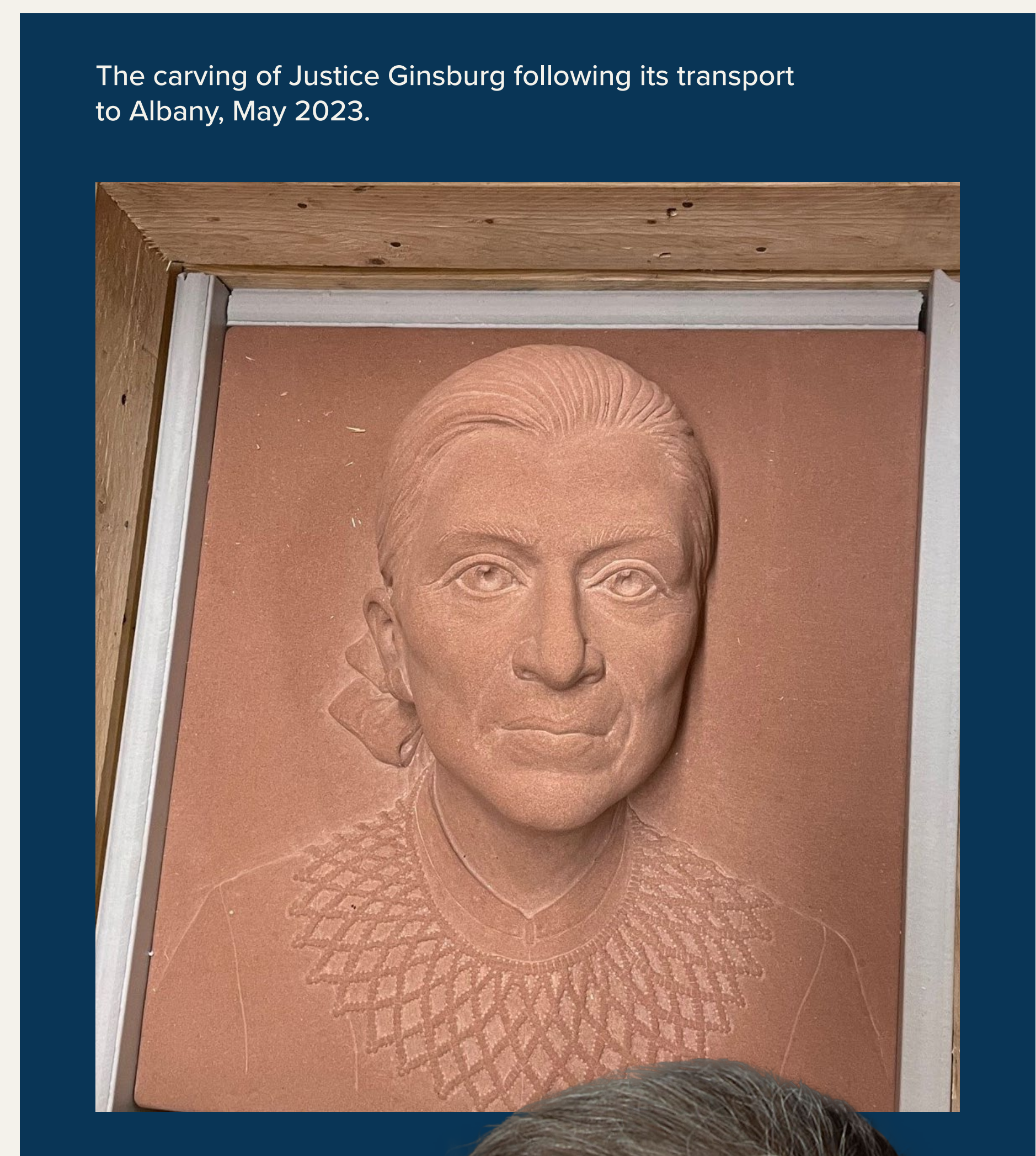
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# A NEW YORKER Immortalized

New York State is adding a permanent portrait carving of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Capitol's Great Western Staircase.

**It's the first new portrait added since the staircase's completion in 1898.** Justice Ginsburg, a Brooklyn native, is just the seventh woman depicted in the staircase gallery, and the first person of Jewish descent.



President Abraham Lincoln's staircase carving, pictured 2016.

**There are 77 – soon to be 78 –** different famous faces carved into the staircase, including the first 30 governors of New York State. The carvings also honor U.S. presidents, explorers, inventors, writers, soldiers, activists, and other individuals who left their mark on our state, our nation, and our world.

Justice Ginsburg in an official portrait, 2016.





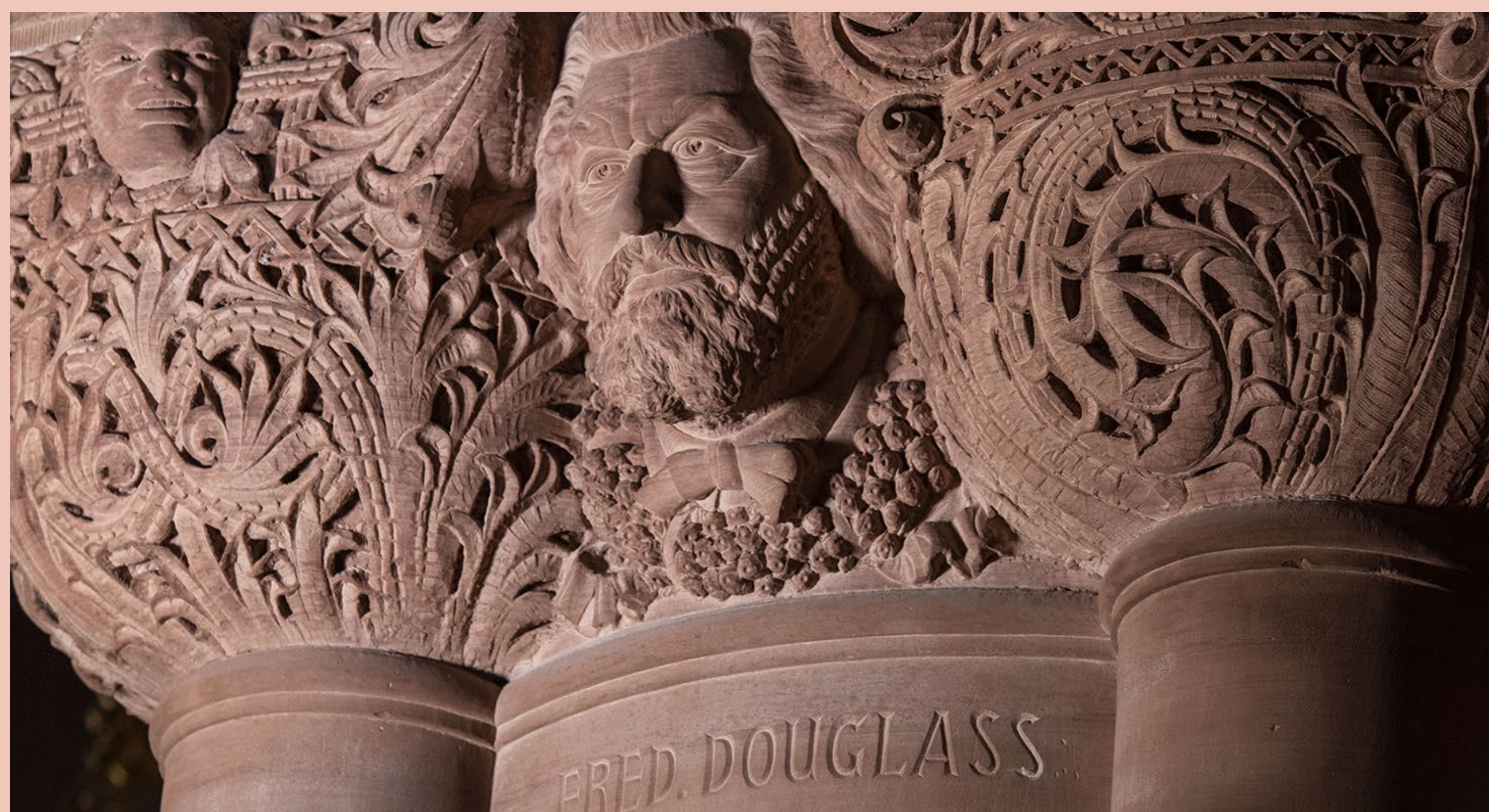
# THE GREAT WESTERN Staircase

The Great Western Staircase, nicknamed the “**Million Dollar Staircase**,” is a monumental interior stair made of Corsehill sandstone from Scotland. Sculptors carved it in place over 14 years starting in 1884.

Criticism followed the staircase’s opening in 1898: Designers overlooked and omitted women of distinction, and not one was included in the dozens of carvings. As a result, the superintendent of public works directed carvers to add six women, all below the second floor.

The original six, soon to be joined by Justice Ginsburg, include:

- **Molly Pitcher**, Revolutionary War soldier
- **Harriet Beecher Stowe**, author of Uncle Tom’s Cabin
- **Susan B. Anthony**, women’s suffrage leader
- **Clara Barton**, Civil War nurse
- **Elmina P. Spencer**, Civil War nurse
- **Frances E. Willard**, temperance movement leader

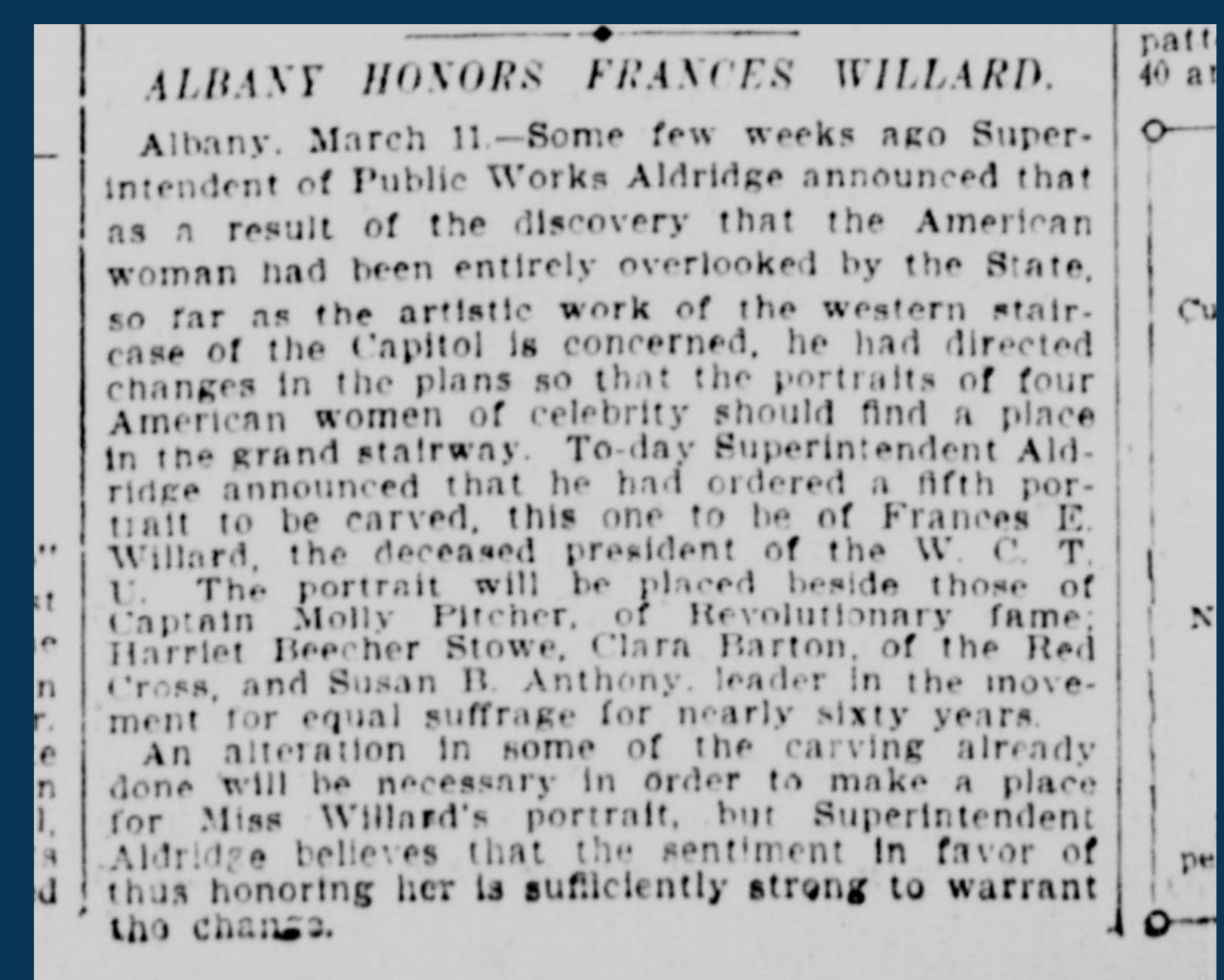


The corrected Frederick Douglass carving, 2019.

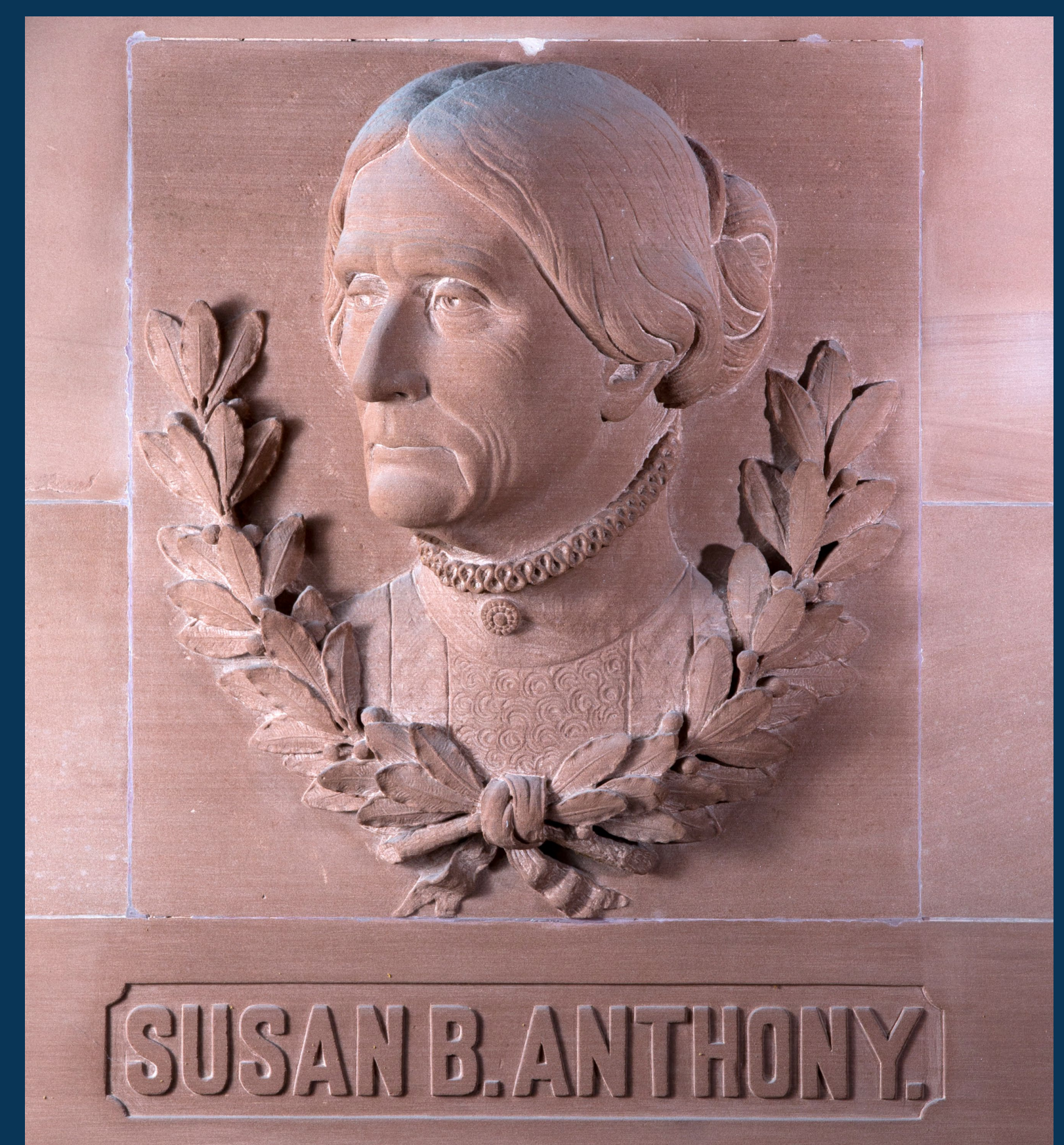
The only modern carving on the staircase occurred in 2019 to correct a 100-year-old misspelling: **Abolitionist Frederick Douglass** was erroneously identified as “**Fred. Douglas.**”



The Great Western Staircase, 1890.



The New York Herald’s piece about the carving controversy, March 12, 1898.



Two original carvings added post-controversy in 1898, pictured in 2017.



# A HISTORIC Addition

Justice Ginsburg’s carving was created by figurative sculptor Meredith Bergmann, who recently completed the Women’s Rights Pioneers Monument in Manhattan’s Central Park. The artist hung the model in place for a “sculpture rehearsal” on the staircase in March 2023.

Bergmann hand-carved the final piece in the same Corsehill sandstone used for the original portraits. A team of skilled masons will remove a sandstone block from the stairs and insert Justice Ginsburg’s carving, securing it in place with steel dowels.

Following installation, the artist will add glasses to the carving, which will be cast in bronze and painted to match the stone. Another stone carver will add the inscription, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to complete the project.

The carving under construction, 2023.



A model of the carving, 2023.



A sign depicting Justice Ginsburg at the Women’s March for equal rights in Washington, D.C., 2017.

Justice Ginsburg’s family approved a model of the proposed portrait. She is remembered as a courageous defender of equal rights and social justice.

*“By carving her portrait into the Capitol, we are both honoring Justice Ginsburg’s legacy as a trailblazer for justice and gender equality, and also celebrating New York’s history as the birthplace of the women’s rights movement.”*

- Governor Kathy Hochul